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# Why Weinberger? Why Carlucci?

Back in California after being announced as secretary of defense, Caspar Weinberger placed calls to Republican members of the Senate Armed Services Committee that deepened the loss of joy among Reaganites six weeks after their great victory.

Weinberger told the senators he wanted as deputy secretary his own selection: Frank Carlucci, a career civil servant who is deputy director of President Carter's CIA. Having heard rumbles against Carlucci's appointment, Weinberger wanted the senators to know how much he needed the bureaucrat who was his deputy at two domestic agencies in Nixon-Ford days.

Almost surely, Ronald Reagan will ignore muted alarms from Capitol Hill and satisfy the wishes of his defense secretary. That guarantees more anguish within the Reagan transition; and raises some unpleasant questions:

Why is Reagan getting a secretary and deputy secretary at defense who both need remedial courses in military nuts and bolts? Why did he pick a reputed

budget-cutter ("Cap the Knife") to rebuild the nation's leaky defense structure? Why is he naming a deputy without known convictions on national security who, fairly or not, is tied to the Carter administration's undermining of American intelligence (and whose nickname in CIA back rooms is "Hamlet")?

The answer falls under this rubric, delivered by a senior transition official, on Reagan decision-making since Nov. 4: "Disorganized, disconnected, lackadaisical." Other transition aides about to return to private jobs agree. Viewing the nation on the brink of domestic and foreign chaos, they have been stunned at the lack of urgency shown by the president-elect and his inner circle.

None of this was obvious in the euphoric post-election mood when defense experts converged on the Pentagon to plan the Reagan takeover. To them, Cap Weinberger was just a "kitchen cabinet" member in California who during the campaign wanted restraints on defense spending. Never did they dream of him as secretary of defense.

One reason the non-dream became reality is the misconception of the kitchen cabinet's aged millionaires that governing a great nation is like running a big corporation. Failing to perceive that the secretary of defense is responsible for policy rather than administration, they thought of Weinberger managing the Pentagon much like the Bechtel Corp. Reagan did not disagree.

No defense secretary has been less familiar with defense problems since Charley Wilson in 1953 (when the hardware was simpler and the dangers more distant). Weinberger's transition experts are preparing elaborate dossiers and hours of tough questioning so he can survive Senate confirmation hearings. They also recommend an experienced deputy secretary for Weinberger to lean on in choosing policy options.

The list is long: William Van Cleave, a nuclear arms expert who was a Reagan campaign adviser and heads his defense transition team; Dr. John Foster, former Pentagon research chief and now a TRW, Inc., vice president; J. Fred

Busey, president of Texas Instruments; former deputy secretary Paul Nitze, a converted Reaganite; Ambassador Seymour Weiss, former State Department politico-military chief. Outside the list, a push has been made for Tom Reed, a former secretary of the Air Force.

But Weinberger insists on fellow neophyte Carlucci, showing as little interest in a knowledgeable deputy as Reagan did in a knowledgeable secretary. Nor did he share apprehension by defense transition officials that as a senior intelligence official of the Carter administration, Carlucci could not be totally separated from its demolition of the CIA.

Van Cleave's men set out to find evidence of Carlucci's complicity but discovered none. ("Frank does not leave footprints," said one prober.) His governmental record is distinguished, crowned by service as ambassador to Lisbon during the Portuguese crisis of the mid-1970s. But he shows no ideological commitment to Reagan's national security policy. "He could work as easily for George McGovern as Ronald Reagan," one transition official told us.

Neither policy views nor experience seem to rate high in filling other Pentagon posts. Rep. Robin Beard of Tennessee, an expert on the volunteer army, would bring rare expertise if named secretary of the Army. But Beard may be passed over in favor of John Marsh, a White House aide under President Ford. The reason: Jerry Ford wants it, as a personal favor.

Dr. John Lehman, a former deputy director of the arms control agency (ACDA), is unusually qualified for secretary of the Navy. But he may be passed over for a junior member of the kitchen cabinet: Bob Nesen, a 62-year-old Cadillac dealer from Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Nobody planned a Pentagon hierarchy so lacking in both background and policy commitment. As with most new administrations, it just happened. What makes this cause for anguish is the nation's desperate condition as it changes government—a condition not often reflected the last six weeks in the president-elect's hunt-and-peck Cabinet making.

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